

Message Text

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61

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TO AMEMBASSY PARIS PRIORITY

INFO AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA

AMEMBASSY DAKAR

USMISSION GENEVA

AMEMBASSY HELSINKI

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NESCO

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TAGS: AORG, APER, SG, UNESCO (M'BOW, A.)

SUBJECT: SELECTION OF NEW DIRECTOR-GENERAL OF UNESCO

REF: PARIS 29379 AND 665

1. IN CONSIDERING U.S. STRATEGY ON UNESCO DG SUCCESSION
ISSUE, DEPT CONCERNED BY POSSIBILITY THAT POLICY OF
WATCHFUL WAITING ADVOCATED REFTELS COULD JEOPARDIZE OUR
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CHANCES OF WINNING IMPORTANT CONCESSIONS FROM ASSISTANT DG

FOR EDUCATION, M'BOW, BEHIND WHOM IMPETUS CONTINUES TO BUILD. WE BELIEVE THAT UNLESS WE WERE PREPARED TO GIVE M'BOW OUR UNQUALIFIED SUPPORT AT A VERY EARLY STAGE, WE WOULD RUN SERIOUS RISK OF MISSING BANDWAGON THAT COULD DEVELOP RAPIDLY FOR M'BOW, ESPECIALLY IN ABSENCE ANY OTHER STRONG LDC CANDIDATE.

2. M'BOW'S CANDIDACY WOULD BE GIVEN MAJOR BOOST NEXT MONTH IF, AS APPEARS QUITE POSSIBLE, ILO ELECTS FRONT-RUNNING FRENCHMAN (BLANCHARD) AS ITS NEW DG. SINCE BLANCHARD'S PRINCIPAL COMPETITOR IS AN AFRICAN FRANCOPHONE FROM DAHOMEY, TEVOEDJRE, IT WOULD BE VERY AWKWARD FOR GOF TO SUPPORT MAHEU AGAINST ANOTHER AFRICAN FRANCOPHONE, M'BOW. PERMREP'S LATEST REPORT OF CONVERSATION WITH MAHEU (PARIS 665) SUGGESTS THAT QUAI MAY ALREADY HAVE ANTICIPATED THIS DILEMMA AND MAY HAVE TAKEN STEPS TO GET MAHEU TO MUTE THE HORN HE HAS BEEN TOOTING FOR HIMSELF DURING PAST SIX MONTHS. RE POSSIBILITY OF BLANCHARD'S SELECTION BY ILO, EARLY ANNOUNCEMENT OF U.S. SUPPORT FOR M'BOW MIGHT RESULT IN OAU MEMBERS (WHO ENDORSED TEVOEDJRE LAST AUGUST) PRESSING LESS HARD FOR TEVOEDJRE AND SOFTEN THEIR DISAPPOINTMENT IF HE SHOULD LOSE. MEANWHILE, DISCUSSION OF ABOVE THINKING ON ILO ELECTION SHOULD BE HELD TO OFFICIAL COMMUNITY UNTIL PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENT OF U.S. POSITION ON THIS ELECTION HAS BEEN MADE.

3. WITH RESPECT TO TIMING OF OUR PUBLIC COMMITMENT TO M'BOW, IN ORDER TO MAXIMIZE OUR BARGAINING POWER (AND ALSO, PERHAPS GIVE US MORE FLEXIBILITY WITH RESPECT TO ILO ELECTION) WE WOULD NEED TO PROMISE M'BOW THAT THE ANNOUNCEMENT WOULD BE MADE AT EARLIEST APPROPRIATE TIME, I.E. IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING OAU'S EXPECTED ENDORSEMENT OF M'BOW'S CANDIDACY AT ITS MEETING NEXT MONTH. IN RETURN, MINIMUM WE WOULD EXPECT FROM M'BOW IS ASSURANCE THAT DEPUTY POST WOULD CONTINUE TO BE FILLED BY INCUMBENT JACK FOBES OR, IF HE IS UNAVAILABLE, BY ANOTHER USG-NOMINATED AMERICAN. DEPUTY SLOT IS ESSENTIAL TO U.S. BECAUSE OF OPPORTUNITY IT GIVES US OF IMPLEMENTING UNESCO'S ADMINISTRATIVE AND PROGRAM ACTIVITIES ALONG LINES SET FORTH IN THE STRATEGIES AND OBJECTIVES PAPER WE SUBMITTED LAST

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JUNE. FOBES' RETENTION WOULD BE PARTICULARLY ADVANTAGEOUS BECAUSE OF RESPECT HE ENJOYS WITHIN SECRETARIAT AND HIS EFFORTS TO COOPERATE WITH USG. MISSION WILL RECALL (STATE 172572) THAT SENEG LESE CHEIKH TIDJANE OF UNESCO SECRETARIAT TOLD DEPT OFFICIALS LAST SUMMER THAT M'BOW "FAVORED" HAVING FOBES OR ANOTHER AMERICAN AS HIS DEPUTY.

4. ANOTHER REASON FOR NEED FOR FIRM ADVANCE COMMITMENT

FROM M'BOW IS POSSIBILITY THAT SOVIETS MIGHT ALSO SEEK THIS POST IN EXCHANGE FOR THEIR SUPPORT FOR M'BOW. SUCH A TRADE-OFF WOULD HAVE MUCH GREATER CHANCE OF SUCCESS, OF COURSE, IF THERE WERE ANOTHER, PREFERABLY NON-EAST EUROPEAN CANDIDATE IN FIELD THAT EAST EUROPEANS COULD SUPPORT. FOR THIS REASON, RECENT RUMORS OF A DARK HORSE CANDIDATE FROM A COUNTRY LIKE FINLAND THAT IS "NON-ALIGNED" BUT SUSCEPTIBLE TO SOVIET INFLUENCE, MAY YET TAKE ON SUBSTANCE. ON OTHER HAND, EARLY U.S. SUPPORT FOR M'BOW WOULD CONSIDERABLY WEAKEN ANY SUCH EFFORT BY SOVS.

5. ANOTHER POSSIBLE QUID PRO QUO HAT WOULD BE HIGHLY ADVANTAGEOUS TO U.S. IS U DERTAKING BY SENEGALESE PERMREP TO SEEK AFRICAN REGIONAL GROUP'S ENDORSEMENT OF OUR (AND CANADIAN) EFFORTS TO HAVE 18TH GENERAL CONFERENCE ASSIGN US TO EUROPEAN REGIONAL GROUP. IF SUCCESSFUL -- AND PROSPECTS SHOULD BE GOOD SINCE AFRICANS HAVE NO COMPELLING, DIRECT INTEREST IN MATTER -- SENEGALESE INTERVENTION WOULD BE SEVERE BLOW TO FRENCH OPPOSITION TO U.S. REGIONAL ASPIRATIONS.

6. ANY SUGGESTIONS WHICH PERMREP MAY HAVE CONCERNING OTHER TYPES OF COMMITMENTS WHICH WE COULD REASONABLY SEEK TO OBTAIN FROM M'BOW IN EXCHANGE FOR OUR SUPPORT WOULD BE WELCOMED. DEPT WOULD ALSO APPRECIATE RECEIVING SOONEST PERMREP'S VIEWS ON ABOVE STRATEGY, AS WELL AS ANY ADDITIONAL INFO MISSION MAY BE ABLE TO OBTAIN, IN INFORMAL TALKS WITH OTHER PERMRE S OR ELSEWHERE, ON M'BOW AND HIS PROSPECTS, POSSIBILITY OF OTHER CANDIDATES BEING NOMINATED, OFFICIAL FRENCH ATTITUDES TOWARD MAHEU, ETC. KISSINGER

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